



PRESS RELEASE

23 October 2007

Shop your way to a top job

When Shaun Butcher left school at 16 he didn't know what he wanted to do. Today he manages a leading Bristol department store that has 250 staff and an annual multi-million pound turnover.

Shaun, who is General Manager at Gardiner Homecentre in Bristol, is featured in a new campaign being run by the West at Work partnership aimed at encouraging more people to consider a job in the retail industry. There are numerous opportunities available locally in a variety of jobs ranging from sales assistants to buyers or managers. And major new retail developments such as Cabot Circus in Bristol and SouthGate in Bath means that retail is a booming business to get into.

Like many young people Shaun didn't have a clear idea of what job would suit him. However once he started working in retail he realised that with ambition and commitment he could build himself a very rewarding career in a sociable and interesting environment.

His current job at Gardiner's provides the sort of variety and challenge that he strives for which is why he is committed to working in the retail industry. He said: "The retail sector is so diverse and as General Manager my responsibilities are broad so I am doing something different every day. Working with a big team and in a service industry can be extremely rewarding and sales and customer satisfaction make it very easy to tell if you are doing a good job or not."

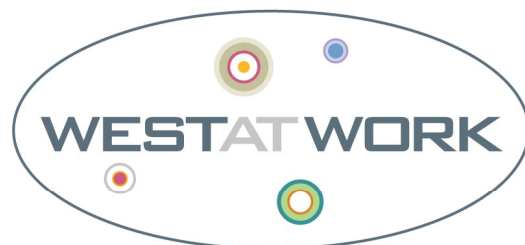
There are more than 60,000 jobs in the retail sector across the West of England and salaries range from around £12,000 a year for a sales assistant to around £60,000 for a regional manager.

Shaun first job was as a warehouse operative within the retail sector and over the next couple of years he found out more about the business, understanding how the industry worked and gaining new skills. All of the knowledge was 'on the job learning' and within Shaun moved into a supervisory role and six months later became an assistant store manager.

Later Shaun formalised the on the job training he had developed over a number of years and completed an NVQ level 2 Retail which gave him the added bonus of qualifications and experience.

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Shaun Adds: “A lot of people don’t consider retail as a career choice but it is a challenging area to work in and bigger stores need people to work across a number of areas such as human resources, security, buying, marketing and so on. The opportunities are numerous and varied.”

As part of the West at Work campaign, Shaun is featured in a new leaflet that has been distributed across the area to encourage more people to consider a job in retail. More than 8,000 people have received the ‘*Getting into Retail*’ leaflet which explains various career paths and training opportunities on offer.

If you would like to find out more about a job in retail or the training opportunities available contact the Skillsmart Retail Advice Line on 0800 093 5001 or visit www.skillsmartretail.com. Alternatively talk to your local Connexions or Jobcentre Plus office.

Copies of the ‘*Getting into Retail*’ leaflet are available from Connexions and IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) outlets.

West at Work is a partnership between the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the South West of England Regional Development Agency (South West RDA), Jobcentre Plus, Business West, Connexions, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council.

For more information about West at Work visit www.westatwork.co.uk

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Shaun Butcher is available for interview by arrangement. For more information please contact Jane Samuel on 07789 705867 or at jane.samuel@lsc.gov.uk

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